



# Hon. Robert T. Matsui

## Member of Congress

[www.house.gov/matsui/](http://www.house.gov/matsui/)

*Robert T. Matsui*  
Serving California's 5th District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Wednesday, May 12, 2004

CONTACT: ELIZABETH LIETZ  
(202) 225-7163/(202) 225-0564

### STATEMENT BY CONGRESSMAN ROBERT T. MATSUI COMMEMORATING ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congressman Robert T. Matsui (D-Sacramento) today issued the following statement commemorating Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, which is celebrated each year during the month of May:

“We commemorate Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage Month to acknowledge the tremendous achievements of Asian Pacific Americans and honor their contributions to our families, communities and our nation.

“The APA community has played a vital role in the development of the United States since the first immigrants came to the United States in the 1700’s. Today, over 11 million Asian Pacific Americans live in the U.S., making extraordinary contributions to every aspect of American life. From David Ho, who has performed breakthrough work on AIDS research, to Maya Lin, the architect who designed the Vietnam Memorial; from the lyrical musings of novelist Amy Tan, to the sublime skills of Tiger Woods, the gifts of the APA community have changed the fabric of American society.

“The APA community has also changed America’s political landscape and I commend all of the APA organizations across America for enhancing the voice of APA’s in the political and social arena. Their tireless efforts inspire others to achieve their dreams. All Americans, regardless of their ethnic background and heritage, benefit from their work.

“Not only is the APA community working today to improve their families and communities, but they also understand the role of history in teaching future generations. As we celebrate APA Heritage Month this year, we also commemorate the opening of the Manzanar National Historic Site and Interpretive Center in Independence, California. Manzanar was the first interment camp created by Executive Order 9066 and was the site where 11,000 of the more than 120,000 American citizens of Japanese ancestry were uprooted from their homes and communities and interned in 1942. The new Manzanar Center is a critical component in recognizing and understanding the events of the past so that we Americans may maintain our country’s fundamental commitment to freedom, democracy, and individual rights. I would like to thank the thousands of individuals who made this project a reality.

“Asian Pacific Americans are as diverse as each of the traditions and cultures they represent. The strength of this diversity and the commitment of all Americans to a shared set of values unites our nation as we work toward a common future. As we celebrate APA Heritage Month, we reflect on the past successes and struggles of the APA community, the diversity that binds us together, and the work we can all do together to make the American dream a reality for all people.”

###